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THE GULL

MONTHLY BULLETIN

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White-headed Woodpecker feeding nestling, 6-69 in Yosemite.
A. Warren Larson photo.

SHOREBIRD CENSUS NEEDS COUNTERS

Can *you* identify shorebirds and estimate their numbers? If so, you have a chanee to render a valuable serviee to the perpetuation of our shorebirds—and of their habitats along our San Franciseo Bay shores as well. The California Departmcnt of Fish and Game has asked the Golden Gate Audubon Soeiety to partieipate in counts bimonthly, or oftener, along our Eastbay shores. Mrs. Violet Homem, Mrs. Leonard Maehlis and Mrs. Aliee Merieourt havc begun eounts on the Albany bayshore. The other area selected to be eovered in this survey is the Alameda South Shore. The eensus periods extend from August through the following May, but this ycar's eount is just being organized.

Each eounter is not expected to know all the rarer shorebirds—such as a Baird's Sandpiper, for example—nor to be a perfectionist in his estimates. The method of estimating large flocks or resting bloeks of birds by taking head eounts of a given portion—such as a tenth--as an estimate basis may bc used. For best results it will be neeessary to wateh tide tables elosely and to begin the counts as the tides start to wane from their highs.

Mr. Clarenee B. Maynard of Berkeley, telephonc 527-0274, has kindly volunteered to assemble a team of eounters. Please call him and indicate what days or hours you eould serve. Report forms will be furnished by the Department of Fish and Game.

Please assist in this project if you possibly can! Let us demonstrate that we, too, are aetivists when called upon for such a good eause!

California Conservation Conference. "A Kaleidoscopie Presentation of Our Metropolitan Environment" was the theme of the Annual Conferenee of the California Conservation Council, held at the Claremont Hotel on Friday-Saturday, October 24-25. Prcsident Hulet Hornbeek had gathered outstanding speakers for panels which eovered a wide range of subjeets. Spokesmen for such divergent interests as Leslie Salt Company (represented by Attorney Harry Jackson, Jr.), Joseph E. Bodovitz of the BCDC and Assemblyman John T. Knox starred on the first panel. Conelusion: our Bay must bc saved from pollution now that it has been granted a legal reprieve from filling.

A Pt. Richmond Regional Park was eloquently pleaded by three well-prepared ladies, reinforced by E. B. Regional Parks Distriet Director Paul J. Badger and a Richmond city planner—but without any real opposition on hand. This appears to be the most available site for a "Contra Costa Shoreline Regional Park," long promised to this county.

A surprisc after-lunch treat of costumed woodwind players from Pt. Riehmond was followed by nap-breaking, nerve-shaking recorded noises introduced by Sound Engineer George Wilson. Author Colin Fletcher and the popular Stephanie Mills, young generation conservation spokesman,

easily convinced the audience of the very real physical and psychological dangers of modern noises. But how do we convince truck and jet plane designers and the hard rock music fan next door? Or at the picnic?

The "Pesticides" panel kept conferees wide awake with Senator John A. Nejedly and Dr. Marc A. Lappe, Cancer-Researcher, launching a devastating attack on DDT and its exponents and meeting challenges from two veteran entomologists, Dr. Ray F. Smith and Dr. John E. Swift. Even for tropic disease control, DDT may be too hazardous in the end, its critics believe.

We couldn't remain for the final afternoon panels, where a panel timekeeper was needed (as at so many of these affairs). And we sincerely regretted being unable to return that evening to hear Dr. Albert Lepawsky present his "Unexploited Ideas for Reversing Environmental Exploitation."

How public school teachers are receiving five days of ecological training on school time in five East Bay Regional Parks was explained during a Saturday morning discussion. An Educational Professional Development Act Outdoor Education Grant has launched this significant, sorely needed program.

Our GGAS President and Supervising Naturalist for the Park District, Joshua Barkin, shared in this panel and in further discussions of "Conservation Education" which followed. Josh helped set up the teacher courses. Assemblyman Willie L. Brown, Jr. spoke at the concluding luncheon. Like several spokesmen for minorities before him, Mr. Brown questioned if we could have efficient conservation education for urban underprivileged until they received decent housing and proper basic education.—

—PAUL F. COVEL, *Conservation Chairman.*

REMINDER—**December 14** is the deadline for letters to the Department of the Interior regarding the Farallon Wilderness proposal. Write to The Regional Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, P.O. Box 3737, Portland, Oregon 97208.

"INDIAN USES OF NATIVE PLANTS"—DEC. 11

Wayne Roderiek of the University of California Botanical Garden will discuss "Indian Uses of Native Plants" at the Golden Gate Audubon Society meeting **Thursday, December 11,** in the Hall of Flowers, Golden Gate Park. Mr. Roderiek is on the Board of Directors of the California Native Plant Society.

The meeting will begin at **7:30 p.m.** The San Francisco Hall of Flowers is on Ninth Ave. at Lincoln Way and the entrance is well lighted. Visitors are welcome. Refreshments will be served.

(Our regular meeting on Thursday, January 8, will include a tour of the Lawrence Hall of Science, U. C. Berkeley. Details will be in the January *Gull.*)

DECEMBER FIELD TRIP

Saturday, December 6 (as announced in November *Gull*) Doran Park and Bodega Marine Laboratory at Bodega Bay, Sonoma County, to study

wintering ducks and shorebirds. On previous trips to this area we have seen Rock Sandpipers, which only casually winter in California. Wintering Rough-legged and Ferruginous Hawks are also occasionally seen here. Meet promptly at **9 a.m.** in first parking lot in Doran Park. Entrance fee, 50¢, requires quarters for automatic gate. Bring lunch and friends, and remember it can be breezy at this time of year. Leader, Dr. A. Laurence Curl.—MRS. VALERIA G. DaCOSTA, *Field Trips Chairman.*

CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Oakland will not have a Christmas census this year because a Coordinator could not be found. Golden Gate Audubon Society members may volunteer to participate in two nearby Christmas counts already scheduled—Sonoma County, **December 20,** and Drake's Bay, **December 27.** For information about the Sonoma County Christmas Count write Baron McLean, 1002 Danbeck Ave., Santa Rosa 95404. The Drake's Bay Count will be sponsored by Point Reyes Bird Observatory. For information write Jack Guggolz, in care of PRBO, Mesa Road, Bolinas 94924. This count includes most of the Point Reyes National Seashore coastline and extends just to the Olema Marsh.

OAKLAND'S NATURALIST PROGRAM

On **Saturday morning, December 13,** Oakland Park Naturalist Paul Covel will lead a walk at Lake Merritt to study "Waterfowl and Other Winter Birds". Meet at **9:30 a.m.** at the Rotary Natural Science Center in Lakeside Park.

"Lake Merritt—Pleasures and Problems of an Urban Wildlife Refuge" is the subject of an illustrated talk by Assistant Naturalist Lionel Kett at **2:30 p.m. Sunday, December 21,** in the Science Center. At **4:15 p.m. Sunday, December 28,** the Science Center will feature an illustrated talk on "The Great Christmas Census"—how the Audubon census is taken across North America.

"Open House" for Oaklanders and their out-of-town guests will be held in the Science Center from 1 to 4:30 p.m. Christmas Day. Two short films will be shown at 2:30 p.m.: "Tree Grows for Christmas" and "Timber and Totem Poles."

AUDUBON NATURE TRAINING

Audubon Nature Training has "gone mobile", having been commissioned to give a teachers' series in Lafayette. This was arranged by Robert Pickard, Resource Teacher in Environmental Education for the Lafayette School District, which is financing the series.

Another innovation—a youth group series was held at St. Mark's Church in Berkeley. The church staff arranged for child care during the session, freeing mothers who could not otherwise attend.

California State College at Hayward is giving a pilot course in outdoor education, focused on use of the schoolyard as an outdoor laboratory. The instructor, Dr. Esther Railton, brought her class to the Nature Center

to familiarize them with the materials available there, including projects completed by school children. They also participated in a demonstration field trip led by Phyllis Lindley.

Thanks to the initiative of Aileen Pierson, KRON-TV filmed a teachers' session at the Center and a workshop session to which Den Mother Mrs. Mary Bucher had brought the Cub Scouts of Den 4, Pack 103. Aida Brenneis was the instructor. As we go to press we don't know when the film will be televised. If you have seen it, or even if you missed it, KRON-TV would be appreciative of an expression of your interest.

An excellent and very much appreciated new service is being provided to Audubon Nature Training by Helen Brenner, our volunteer librarian.

"POLLUTION SHOW" AT OAKLAND MUSEUM

Artists and conservation organizations of the Bay Area will join forces to present a "Pollution Show" at the Oakland Museum from **January 10 to February 15.** Golden Gate Audubon's Vice President, Claire Johnson, will be in charge of a table displaying Audubon literature and she would appreciate assistance from other members. If you can volunteer a few hours please telephone Mrs. Johnson, 533-7118.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Gifts of remembrance were made to **Audubon Nature Training Program:**

In Memory of:	*Gift of:*
Mrs. Phyllis Zweigart	Mr. & Mrs. John Dang
Mrs. F. Lozear	Edward O'Leary family
Harry Barker, Sr.	Douglas & Frances J. McCallum

Gifts of remembrance were made to **Audubon Canyon Ranch:**

In Memory of:	*Gift of:*
Mrs. Phyllis Zweigart	Lucile Foster
Mrs. John Morrill	*Mrs. Jean A. Jones*

DR. ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary & Memorial Fund Chairman.*

BAY TIDELANDS GIVEN TO NATURE CONSERVANCY

Among recent acquisitions by The Nature Conservancy are two Marin County tideland areas. One is a gift from Elma Louise Day and Harriett Day Robbins. It is a 5½-acre tideland biotic community. According to *Nature Conservancy News* the tract is a key one as it blocks any southeasterly extension of a lagoon type subdivision on bay-fill. Another gift is a small tideland parcel on the shore of a residential area with a fine view of East Marin Island, an important egret rookery. This tract is a gift of Dr. and Mrs. William Upton of San Rafael.

FIELD TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

The highlight of the October 4th boat trip off Monterey was the spectacular number of petrels—about 3,000 of them, including Black, Ashy, a few Fork-tailed and 1 Least (the second Northern California record). A

Short-eared Owl was resting on a buoy 8 miles offshore. There were fewer shearwaters this year. (More details in the next *Gull.*) The leaders were Alan Baldridge, Ted Chandik, Guy McCaskie, Fred Sibley, Rich Stalleup, and Russell Wilson. The Angwin Bird Club reported about 6,000 petrels on the boat trip the following week.

During the October 18th trip to Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Fred Sibley and his staff gave an excellent demonstration of bird banding.

About 60 birders attended the Palo Alto salt marsh trip on November 2 and learned a great deal about marsh ecology from the leader, Ted Chandik.—MRS. VALERIA G. DaCOSTA, *Field Trips Chairman.*

OBSERVATIONS CALENDAR

Oct. 12—Sabine's Gull at Rodeo Lagoon observed by Val & Bob DaCosta.

Oct. 13—*Baird's* Sparrow (showing orange median stripe on head) at Point Reyes near the lighthouse road—found by Val & Bob DaCosta. They saw about 60 Red Crossbills on Inverness Ridge, where a Cooper's Hawk was chasing them. Crossbills still there on Nov. 6.

Oct. 14—Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Bodega Bay observed by Dr. L. Binford. Bill Pursell found a Black-and-White Warbler foraging in cypresses above Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Moss Beach.

Oct. 21—Black-legged Kittiwake at Rodeo Lagoon, resting with Heermann's Gulls.

Oct. 26—(and later) a White-throated Sparrow at Jack Goggolz' feeder in Richmond.

Oct. 27—Immature *Northern* Shrike south of Dumbarton Bridge toll gate observed by Bud Fry.

October—Harris' Sparrow on Pt. Reyes lighthouse road—Dr. Binford.

Nov. 2—Red Crossbills in Oakland hills near Phyllis Lindley's house.

Nov. 3—Immature Northern Shrike at Limantour—Bud Fry.

Nov. 4—Blue-winged Teal in Palo Alto salt marsh.

Mr. and Mrs. Jason Schoener watched a photogenic part-albino Robin in Oakland this fall. "The bird had a white head, white wings, white tail. His breast was red and the nape of his neck was the usual dun color."

SANDHILL CRANES WEAR PLASTIC MARKERS

Sacramento Audubon Society's *Observer* reports that 103 Greater Sandhill Cranes will be carrying plastic markers this winter. Birds nesting on the Grays Lake Refuge in Idaho have been marked above the ankle joint with 2¼" square green, orange, yellow or red plastic markers. Birds from the Malheur Refuge in Oregon have been marked with 1½" brightly colored plastic bands placed above the conventional metal bands. In addition Malheur birds are carrying colored plastic streamers 1½" wide and 4" long attached to the metal bands. Twenty-five Malheur birds are dyed green.

"The Greater Sandhill Crane is officially listed as a rare bird and the markings are an effort to discern the exact migration and wintering areas

to give them special attention. Anyone sighting marked cranes is urged to report the date and place of sighting and the nature of the markers to the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Federal Bldg., 650 Capitol Mall, Sacramento 95814 or the California Department of Fish and Game, Resources Building, 1416-9th St., Sacramento 95814.

"The January 1968 census indicates that there are approximately 19,000 cranes in the State, 12,000 of which winter in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The majority of the local cranes are probably the Greater Sandhill species."

On October 5 about 1,000 Sandhill Cranes were observed near Thornton by A. & E. Parker of the Sacramento Audubon Society.

SAVE CALIFORNIA'S BIOTIC COMMUNITIES

A conference entitled "Save California's Biotic Communities" will be held early next year at the Oakland Museum. Dr. G. Ledyard Stebbins, President of the California Native Plant Society, spurred by Mr. John Olmsted of the California Institute of Man in Nature, with the cooperation of Dr. C. Don MacNeill, Associate Curator II of the Natural Sciences Division of the Oakland Museum, will organize the conference.

The goals for the Conference are:

1) Compiling as complete a list as possible of existing areas with significant biotic communities already under public or private dedication in California,

2) Developing an "action" acquisition list for significant areas not yet protected,

3) Setting up a policy for use of such lands.

OIL PIPELINE HAZARDS

Under Secretary Train told the Senate Interior Committee that the Interior Department wants to start giving out construction permits for the 800-mile Alaskan oil pipeline to be built piece-by-piece. This is in spite of the fact that admittedly the department hasn't figured out all the environmental safeguards that will be needed.

We can only hope this does not set the tone for the development of the North Slope: *act first and worry about the damage later.* As *Science* magazine noted recently, there were 500 sizable pipeline leaks in the U.S. last year. A fifth of these spilled 1,000 to 12,000 barrels of oil. These were from pipes that ranged from 8 to 20 inches. The Alaska pipeline will be 48 inches, the largest ever built, and each mile of it will carry 500,000 gallons of hot oil.—*Audubon Leader's Conservation Guide.*

A LETTER FROM MEXICO—Accommodations designed for the exclusive needs of birders are available in Chiapas, Mexico. They are "being offered only to members of the Audubon Society and their affiliates," according to a letter from Mr. Nich Andersen, Hogar Infantil, A.C., Apartado Postal 14, Ocozocoautla, Chiapas, Mexico. For information write to Mr. Andersen.

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Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward THE GULL. Monthly meetings second Thursday 7:30 p.m. Joint membership, Local & National $10 per yer, includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and THE GULL. Subscription to THE GULL separately $2 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.